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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR KHALILZAD'S INTRODUCTORY CALL ON GA
PRESIDENT KHALIFA, MAY 7, 2007

¶1. (U) Summary. In his first meeting with GA President Khalifa, Ambassador Khalilzad stressed the need to make progress on key reforms at the UN so as to ensure lasting support from the publics of Member States. Khalifa noted that U.S. support was essential for progress on many issues. The Ambassador also, as Security Council President for the month, presented the President with a copy of the program of work and promised to keep the lines of communication between the two bodies open. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Ambassador Khalilzad called on General Assembly President Haya al Khalifa on Monday, May 7. Khalifa expressed her appreciation for the Ambassador's participation in the recent General Assembly (GA) debate on Security Council reform. She said that U.S. support was required for progress on "many, many issues." At the same time, it was everyone's responsibility to overcome the "mistrust between Member States" that currently exists in New York. The Ambassador replied that he had worked closely with the UN in the field, in Afghanistan and Iraq, and understood its ability to contribute, when given the right mandate, to the lives of people around the world. In order to maintain broad support for the UN among the publics of Member States, the organization needed to demonstrate that it was capable of reforming itself. Absent reform, the UN will develop an image as wasteful and ineffective, undercutting its support among Member States. The Ambassador said that he wanted to prioritize reforms, focusing on a couple of high priority items in the immediate term.

¶3. (SBU) Khalifa agreed with this approach but complained, "The logic here in New York is hard." As an example, she commented on mandate review, which she said was a completely unobjectionable exercise. In the UN context, however, when mandate review was put on the table, "Everyone blocked it." She and the Ambassador agreed that the overall objective of reform was to strengthen the UN, but, the Ambassador emphasized, a strong UN needed to be effectively run, adapt to changing circumstances and use limited resources wisely. Khalifa stressed that any reform process needed to be "transparent".

¶4. (SBU) As another example of the difficulty of implementing reform initiatives, Khalifa said that the G-77 had objected to her plan to review the Secretary-General's report on System-Wide Coherence. She has suggested discussions on the different issues in the report (governance, gender, finance, etc.) in separate tracks, taking advantage of existing UN bodies where appropriate. The G-77, she said, had demanded that she consider the entire report in one track, which would be an invitation to inaction. She noted that small countries from within the G-77 had come to her privately to express support for her proposal. They are unable to stand up to the bloc leaders in public, however. Khalifa expressed appreciation to the Ambassador for the U.S.' constructive position on the follow-up to the report.

15. (U) The Ambassador noted that he was also calling on the GA President in his capacity as Security Council President for the month of May. He presented her with a copy of the monthly program of work, and offered to remain in close contact. He noted that he had conducted a briefing, open to all UN Member States, on the program of work following its adoption at the beginning of the month. (Note: Despite the repeated complaints in General Assembly discussions about the Security Council's "lack of transparency", this briefing, which was announced in the UN's Daily Journal, was attended by less than twenty delegations -- only one of which showed up at the Ambassadorial level. End Note.)
KHALILZAD